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The ruling coalitions in the Republic of Moldova after the “Twitter Revolution” – the policy of integration or desintegration?

Abstract: In 2009, the Republic of Moldova created an alternative to the communist leadership. In 2013, the Alliance for European Integration was replaced by the Alliance for Pro-European Governance, which secured two issues: the signing of the Association Agreement between the Republic of Moldova and the European Union, and the interests of local oligarchs. After the parliamentary elections in 2014, as an alternative to the increasingly powerful Igor Dodon’s Party of Socialists, another coalition, the Political Alliance for European Moldova was created and ‘sealed’ by embezzling \$ 1 billion from Moldovan banks (12.5% of GDP). The coalition formed in January 2015, was replaced by the re-launched Alliance for European Integration, and then by another coalition without a definite name in January 2016. This extremely expanded political activity is a backdrop for the façade of democracy and the subsequent parliamentary elections scheduled for 2018. The pro-European coalitions in the Republic of Moldova discredited themselves in front of the society as strongly as their predecessors (the communists), causing a state of general disintegration.

Key words: Moldova, pro-European coalition, corruption, parliamentary elections in the Republic of Moldova in 2018

Introduction

Since 1990, eighteen cabinets have ruled or ‘appeared’ in the Republic of Moldova (if we recognize the one of Valeriu Muravschi and Mircea Druca; two terms by Ion Sturza and Iurie Leancă; the cabinet of Chiril Gaburici and Valeriu Streleț – this one received a vote of confidence from the Parliament on July 30, 2015; and the cabinet of Pavel Filip, appointed on January 20, 2016), and early elections have been held several times. The party scene is constantly evolving (Sikora-Gaca, 2013, pp. 10, 16, 170), as evidenced by the resignation of Prime Minister Chiril Gaburici, following the vote of no confidence for the Streleț government on October

29, 2015, by the rise and activity of the Civic Platform Dignity and Truth and by a new political party, the European People's Party created by Iurie Leancă (July 27, 2015 was the date of the founding congress of the party), or by the arrest of Vlad Filat on October 15, 2015, and by ongoing social protests and unprecedented accumulation of power in the hands of one oligarch – Vlad Plahotniuc. These intense measures of power, especially after 2009, demanded a number of coalitions and established political and business relations which *de facto* mostly grew on close relations with Voronin, and after his fall, took the form of individual political projects. The analysis of the created coalitions and established political and business relations is the basic objective of the research initiated in this article.

Thus, in the Republic of Moldova the times that followed after the Twitter Revolution¹ can be divided into two distinct periods: until 2012, when the launched pro-European coalition, working on integration with the European Union, led to the election of President Nicolae Timofti; and the years after 2013, when a *quasi*-change stage is observable, and disputes within the coalition, over time, begin to take on the form of open 'civil war,' including open conflict between the major oligarchs (Zdaniuk, 2016, pp. 194–195); the Socialist Party wins the parliamentary elections of November 30, 2014, and in 2015, the banking crisis is linked to the *Banca de Economii* and *Banca Sociala*.

Therefore, the subject matter of this article is the governing coalitions in the Republic of Moldova, initiated after the aforementioned Twitter Revolution. The main research hypothesis assumes that they played an important role in shaping the Moldovan political and party leadership, mainly because of the fact that the communists were removed from power. However, the main research problem has been based on the following statement: in the 'decommunized' Moldovan political system, which was introduced after 2009, there are more disintegrating phenomena than examples of integration. The article uses mixed methods of theoretical research (Nowak, Głowiński, 2013, pp. 136–146), useful in both empirical and theoretical cognition, including: analysis, synthesis, induction and deduction.

¹ The Twitter Revolution is defined as the social protests initiated in the Republic of Moldova in 2009. They were organized by a journalist Natalia Morar, who, with the help of the Twitter social networking site, gathered several thousand protesters in front of the Moldovan Parliament. As a result of the Twitter Revolution in the Republic of Moldova, the communists were removed from power and a coalition, the Alliance for European Integration, was formed.

The political context – the parliamentary elections of 2010 and 2014²

Moldovan pluralism is said to have a geopolitical base, but equally often it is attributed a personal, political or social nature (Munteanu, 2010, p. 13). These lines of division – although in many cases described as marginal – are important in shaping the party scene. In the systems of many countries, the ruling elites hold an important position and they largely represent the political and economic oligarchy of the country (Bodio, 2010, p. 18). In the Republic of Moldova these include the rule of the ‘three Vlads’ (Oleksy, 2015, pp. 90–96) – Voronin, Filat and Plahotniuc, of Igor Dodon, or businessman Renato Usatîi – the current mayor of Balti. Their consequence is a specific system of clan corporatism in which the integration of state institutions with business structures is very deep (Căluș, 2015, pp. 1–9; Afeltowicz, 2010, pp. 69–104). In Moldova, this system is also the cause of numerous transformation problems, including destabilizing factors, among which the main roles are played by the conflict in Transnistria, negative consequences of the economic transformation, institutional instability, unstable internal reforms and, above all, the lack of national project around which the society could be consolidated (Sikora-Gaca, 2015b, pp. 89–104).

To analyze the entire political context of current affairs in the Republic of Moldova, the last two parliamentary rivalries should be discussed. On the one hand, they sanctioned (2010) a certain balance of power existing since 2009, and on the other one they introduced new partners into political activity (2014). The results of these parliamentary elections are a perfect reflection of the impact of geopolitical factors on the development of statehood. 2010 confirmed the results of the political avalanche triggered by the wave of the Twitter Revolution, by the pro-European governments initiated by the Alliance for European Integration and the role of Moldova promoted by the European Union through the Eastern Partnership. Meanwhile, 2014 emphasized the role of Russia in the region, whose interests were threatened by the Association Agreement ratified by the Moldovan Parliament (June 27, 2014). The support granted to Igor Dodon’s Socialist Party, and the appearance of Renato Usatîi’s Patria

² This article uses source materials elaborated for the project *Geopolitical Dilemmas. Poland and Germany and the Processes and Challenges of Europeanization in the Eastern Europe and Caucasia* on the importance of geopolitical factors in the development of Moldovan statehood in 2014 and 2015 (See: Sikora-Gaca, 2015, pp. 157–173).

Party on the political scene, were to halt the huge step initiated towards further Europeanization.

Early elections were held on November 28, 2010. The election threshold was reduced from 5% to 4% (for a coalition of two parties – 7%, for coalitions of three or more parties – 9%). Voter turnout was 63.35%. The Our Moldova Alliance won only 2.05% of the votes, thus not exceeding the election threshold. Since the elections in 2010, the Alliance for European Integration was constituted by only three parties: the Liberal Democratic Party, the Democratic Party of Moldova and the Liberal Party. In 2011, the communists tried to bring Zinaida Greceanîi to the election as President, however Nicolae Timofti was chosen head of state (March 16, 2012). Mihai Ghimpu proposed his candidacy. Filat accepted it fairly quickly, because Timofti was unable to threaten his leadership within the ruling structure. The election of the President was made possible thanks to Igor Dodon – a former member of the Communist Party, who supplied the ruling coalition with the missing votes. Dodon – a supporter of modern social democracy, held the position of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy under Voronin. In 2011, he came second in the election for the mayor of Chisinau, which initiated his further successful political activity. In the same year, Dodon headed the non-parliamentary Party of Socialists. Since then, his political influence has been growing steadily (Luft, 2014, pp. 80–81).

In 2013, based on the disputes between the two major oligarchs and political leaders, Vlad Filat and Vlad Plahotniuc, there was an attempt to introduce a mixed system (the bill was soon nullified) in the Republic of Moldova, the electoral threshold was once again raised (from 4% to 6% for political parties, 9% for coalitions of two parties, 11% for coalitions of three or more parties) (Całus, *Nowy rzqd w Moldawii...*). On February 13, 2013, Vlad Filat broke the coalition agreement. Marian Lupu's and Vlad Plahotniuc's Democratic Party asked for a vote of no confidence for the government, which was voted for in an agreement, with the opposition of the communists. President Timofti entrusted the dismissed Prime Minister Filat with the duties of acting head of government and designated him Prime Minister of the new government. The leader of the liberals, Mihai Ghimpu, filed an application to the Constitutional Court to recognize the decision of the President as non-compliant with the Constitution, although the majority of the deputies of his party expressed their readiness to support the next government headed by Filat (Luft, 2014, pp. 81–82). On April 22, 2013, by the decision of the Constitutional Court, Filat was

prevented from further participation in political life, due to corruption allegations (Căluș, *Moldawski Sąd Konstytucyjny...*).³ With the votes of the deputies from the Liberal Democratic Party and the Party of Communists, the parliament's speaker Marian Lupu was dismissed, as well as the Attorney General, who was considered to be close to Plahotniuc. The Prime Minister was statutorily assigned with his office to fight corruption and given the possibility of recalling the members of the Constitutional Court by the Parliament at any time. The latter two decisions provoked outrage in Brussels (Luft, 2014, pp. 82–83).

The new Prime Minister, Iurie Leancă, was appointed on April 22, 2013. On May 30, 2013, an agreement was signed to form a new majority coalition called the Coalition for Pro-European Governments (including the Liberal-Democratic Party of Moldova, the Democratic Party (PDM) and seven former members of the Liberal Party). On the same day the Parliament, by the votes of MPs in favor of the coalition (53 + 5 independent MPs), gave a vote of confidence to the new cabinet composed of personnel slightly different from the previous government of Filat (Luft, 2014, p. 83). Igor Corman became the new Speaker of the Parliament, replacing Marian Lupu (both from PDM). The new government was appointed in fear of early elections. Its main task was to maintain the almost completed negotiations on the Association Agreement with the EU and to wait for its signing. The culmination of the procedure was the ratification (minimum majority – 53 votes) of the Agreement on June 27, 2014, at a special meeting of the Parliament. Signing the Association Agreement was a major step for Moldova towards integration with Community structures.

The political encounter of November 30, 2014 was played out between the Liberal Party, the Liberal-Democratic Party, the Democratic Party of Moldova, the Party of Communists of the Republic of Moldova and the Party of Socialists. Before the election, due to the accusation of financing from abroad, Renato Usatîi's Patria Party was eliminated. Pre-election polls indicated that approx. 13% of Moldovan society identified with Patria and its anti-European views (Sikora-Gaca, 2015a, pp. 175–186). Meanwhile, the pro-European parties saw representations of Russia's interests in Moldova in it. On the other hand, many commentators share the opinion that Filat and Plahotniuc feared oligarchic competition in the implementation of particular interests.

³ There were no prosecution proceedings against V. Filat. It turned out that 4 of 6 judges who delivered the judgment were appointed according to the political key.

The election rivalry of 2014 was won by the Party of Socialists, with 20.51% of votes with 25 seats in Parliament. Second place in the election was taken by one of the representatives of the Coalition for the pro-European Governments – the Liberal Democratic Party – 20.16% with 23 seats. The next were as follows: the Party of Communists – 17.48% with 21 seats in Parliament, the Democratic Party of Moldova – 15.8% with 19, and the Liberal Party – 9.67% with 13.

The parliamentary elections of 2014 changed the balance of power on the Moldovan political scene. A minority coalition of two parties was established on January 23, 2015: the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM) and the Democratic Party of Moldova (PDM), under the name of the Political Alliance for European Moldova (APME). An informal base for the coalition is the Party of Communists (PCRM). The Liberal Party of Mihai Ghimpu was not allowed to gain power. Iurie Leancă was prohibited from taking the position of Prime Minister. Thanks to the votes of the PCRM, Adrian Candu became the Chairman of Parliament – he is the godson of Plahotniuc. On February 18, the government of Chiril Gaburici was appointed (associated with both Filat and Voronin) (Calus, 2015, pp. 1–3). On June 12, 2015, Prime Minister Gaburici resigned. On June 22 the same year, Natalia Gherman, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Integration, the daughter of the first President of Moldova Mircea Snegur, became the acting Prime Minister of Moldova. The date for the appointment of a new government was set for September 12, 2015.

“The theft of the century” – 2015

At the turn of 2014 and 2015, the unstable state of Moldova survived the banking crisis associated with the threatened collapse of *Banca de Economii* and *Banca Sociala*, called by the media the “theft of the century.” The Moldovan Central Bank introduced a commissary administration in both banks, finding numerous irregularities. These institutions were controlled by Ilan Shor – a millionaire connected with Russian business. The Moldovan banking scandal referred to two important names from the political system – Filat⁴ (*Cate 30 de...*) and Plahotniuc. The first is said to

⁴ Filat’s relatives were arrested – Ion Rusu and Vladimir Rusu, and two people connected with the company called Caravita – Igor and Tatiana Chizhova Rosioru on charges of financial mismanagement – non-payment of loans taken out in *Banca de Economii*.

be responsible for the crisis of *Banca de Economii*, the latter for that of *Banca Sociala* (Oleksy, 2015, pp. 90–91). Therefore, the pro-European parties did not expect too much success in local elections, the outcome of which, due to political instability and the protests of the Civic Platform Dignity and Truth, was unpredictable.

“The theft of the century” took the form of an international financial scandal, in which the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development was also involved. It refers, first and foremost, to a letter sent by the Vice President of the EBRD – Philip Bennett, to Prime Minister Natalia German, in which he criticizes the actions taken by the Moldovan authorities. In 2015, the Moldovan Parliament voted to amend the law on financial institutions which blocked the EBRD to acquire an additional stake in *Victoriabank* – one of the biggest commercial banks in Moldova⁵ (*Поправка пошла на...*).

It should also be noted that the financial crisis associated with the ‘withdrawal’ of Moldovan money is not limited to the banks. The practice has been extended to all possible industries, which is visible after an analysis of the loss of Moldovan state-owned enterprises, which in 2014 amounted to 3 billion lei, five times more than in 2013. According to many experts, the enterprises and companies belonging to the Moldovan state budget, in many cases, exist only in order to launder dirty money and generate income for the state officials employed there. Most energy companies (including Moldovagaz, Moldelectrica, Energocom) lost over 2.5 billion lei in 2014. The losses of Moldovan railway are now estimated at approx. 101 million lei. Nepotism, cronyism or over-employment were common. All of this had a catastrophic impact on the Moldovan financial situation. For example, the company MoldATSA generated a 48 million lei profit in 2013, and in 2014 it had a 29 million lei loss. The profits of Moldtelecom or AirMoldova have fallen several dozen times (from more than 60 million lei to approx. 2 million)⁶ (*Как в Молдове...*).

Both the “theft of the century” and the situation of the Moldovan pre-state enterprises, as described above, are the effects of a ‘tradition’ of inefficient management on which subsequent governments and oligarchs

⁵ Victoriabank was founded at the turn of the 1980s and 90s. It was the first commercial bank in Moldova. Since 1995, it has established cooperation with the EBRD. In 2006, one of the shareholders of the bank, among others, was Vlad Plahotniuc.

⁶ In 2013, the losses of the entities referred to amounted to 600 million lei, in 2014 it was already 3 billion. Their debt increased by 50% – from 26.7 to 39.9 million lei, and their revenues increased by only 10%.

controlling the state make their money. The *Banca de Economii* managers earned 60,000 lei per month. Members of the Supervisory Board, exercising their function for just two months, received annual salaries in advance. The remuneration of Moldtelecom Chief Executive was 50,000 lei per month, while company profits fell three times. Deputy Minister of Economy – Octavian Calmic, as a representative of the state in the supervisory boards of five companies (*Banca de Economii*, Metalferos, Moldexpo, UNIC and Moldovagaz) received 620,000 lei per month. Another politician received approx. 500,000 lei for being a member of supervisory boards in 9 companies. Director of the Civil Aviation Department – Iurie Armas has put the state budget on a loss of 800,000 lei. These are just some of the examples of power abuse that are ruining the Moldovan state. Moldovan officials use every opportunity to earn money at the expense of the state (*Глава Органа гражданской...*). It should be noted that the average salary in Moldova is approx. 4,500 lei. Privatization appears to be the only remedy, but in the context of widespread pillaging of the Moldovan state, there is a significant concern that it will only become a tool for accumulating private fortunes.

On June 11, 2015, 50% of the entire banking sector of Moldova was placed under official supervision. The decision to nationalize *Banca de Economii* blocked the launch of a new credit line for Moldova by the IMF (*Moldawia: wybory lokalne...*), and this led to a series of subsequent events. The World Bank also stopped the payment of credit funds. For a long time, the European Union has also been considering blocking the flow of finance, as the political situation in Moldova, after signing the Association Agreement, is highly unsatisfactory.

Sandu, Streleț and the foundation of the AEI-3 – July coalition negotiations

On July 23, 2015, Minister of Education – Maia Sandu – was nominated for the position of Moldova's Prime Minister on behalf of the Liberal Democratic Party of Moldova. The candidacy was defined as good, due to her non-involvement in corruption scandals (which is an incredible rarity among Moldovan politicians) and the support of the international environment (in the years 2010–2012 Sandu worked for the World Bank) (*Ex-World Bank...*). On the same day, Vlad Filat, Marian Lupu and Mihai Ghimpu signed a coalition agreement – the Alliance for Euro-

pean Integration (AEI-3). Party leaders declared their common desire to elect a new Prime Minister by the end of July 2015 (*Луну подтвердил: Майя...*). Filat declared the need to reform legal institutions that should not be subjected to any political influence. He also stressed the need for support from the European Union and the United States. Yet on July 23, the President of Romania – Klaus Iohannis, gave his support to Sandu; on July 24 Igor Dodon criticized the democratic liberals' candidate, stating that she would not receive the Socialists' support.

AEI-3 submitted the following priorities for their action: continuation of the pro-European course of state policy, establishment of the rule of law and independent judiciary, elimination of corruption from public administration and social mentality, release of state institutions from the vested interests of political clans. The liberal democrats received 6 ministries and the liberals 4. Reform of the prosecutor's office in consultation with the European Commission was also proposed (*Михай Гимпу раскритиковал...*).

On July 24, 2015, Maia Sandu presented the conditions under which she agreed to hold the position of Prime Minister. She demanded the resignation of the head of the National Bank – Dorin Dragutanu and of the Attorney General – Corneliu Gurin. She blamed both for the “theft of the century” and a withdrawal of 1 billion lei from Moldovan banks. Unfortunately, Sandu's requests, by which she wanted to prove to the public the sincere intentions of her future government, weakened her negotiating position. Plahotniuc stood up against her. Ghimpu called the PM candidate a “whimsical doll” and said that her demands went beyond the Alliance (*Михай Гимпу раскритиковал...*). Renato Usatîi was also outraged by the candidate's demands. He said: “Sandu is not a queen, and Moldova is not a monarchy” (*Ренато Усатый выступил...; Бывшие обещают светлое...*).

Three days later, the Alliance introduced a new candidate for Prime Minister – the vice chairman of the LDPM – Valeriu Streleț. On July 27, President Tomoifti signed the official nomination. To obtain a vote of confidence for Streleț's Cabinet, the Alliance needed 51 votes, the coalition partners held 52 seats in Parliament (out of 101) (*Ренато Усатый выступил...; Бывшие обещают светлое...*). Therefore, nobody expected any negative scenarios, even though one should always remember about the margin of error in Moldovan politics.

The first task of the new Prime Minister was to negotiate a new agreement with the International Monetary Fund, for Moldova to effectively

regain 3 billion lei of frozen foreign aid. Experts said that signing this agreement would only increase corruption, because in Moldova each money transfer process serves the political groups, not the state (*Чем владеет кандидат...*). The financial aid received by Moldova in 2010–2013 did not change the structure of the Moldovan economy.

Valeriu Streleț is one of the richest MPs in the Moldovan Parliament. He manages the Bioprotekt SRL company, which is one of the biggest Moldovan importers and distributors of phytosanitary products. His partner – Aurelia Bregutse owns the Dezwoltarii company. Streleț's nomination was a clear signal that the ruling elites have no intention of changing anything within the oligarchic political system. Sandu showed too bold independence in her demands, Streleț promised obedience to the Alliance's discipline. On July 30, his government won a vote of confidence from the Moldovan Parliament (*Чем владеет кандидат...*) with the votes of the coalition. Socialists, communists and members of the Leancă group voted against.

Dissolution of the Streleț government, further coalition talks, Pavel Filip's cabinet

On October 29, 2015, the Moldovan Parliament passed a vote of no confidence for the coalition government of Valeriu Streleț. The proposal was supported by 65 out of 101 Members, including politicians from the Party of Socialists, the Communist Party and the coalition partner – the Democratic Party (PDM). A vote of no confidence was filed on suspicion of corruption and political-business ties with Vlad Filat, who was arrested on October 15. Streleț's request to dismiss Viorel Chetaru, head of the National Anti-Corruption Center (VTS), considered to be a *protégé* of Plahotniuc, brought no results (*Андреев, Нехотя уходит: Валериу...*). Following the dismissal of the government, the chairman of the Democratic Party (PDM) – Marian Lupu announced the start of negotiations on the rebuilding of the pro-European coalition with the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM), the Liberal Party (PL) and the deputies associated with Iurie Leancă (Całus, *Mołdawia: upadek rzqdu...*). Filat's arrest triggered a strong crisis in the state and numerous social protests, and, as a result, the breakdown of AEI-3. Removing Streleț from the Prime Minister's function was a deliberate political act aimed at establishing Plahotniuc's dominance on the political scene, who himself aspired to this position

(Андреев, *Как в востум...*). President Timofti appointed Gheorghe Brega as the acting Prime Minister (the decree on this matter was signed on October 30) until the appointment of the new government (*Либерал Георге Брега...*). For Marian Lupu, the best candidate for the post of the Prime Minister was Iurie Leancă, especially because of the numerous contributions that this politician has made to the consolidation of Moldova's integration into the European Union. Discussions on the creation of Lupu's new alliance were already launched on October 30. However, they were postponed due to the unspecified stand on this issue of the members of the Liberal Democratic Party (Андреев, *Бег по кругу...*). Concerns over the events in the Republic of Moldova were expressed by representatives of the international community, including David McAllister (*Денутам Европарламента: Молдавские...*).

On November 4, 2015, the Liberal Democratic Party, by an absolute majority of the party's political council's votes, decided not to participate in coalition negotiations to create a new parliamentary majority. The PLDM justified its position with the fact that it did not recognize the Democratic Party (PDM) as pro-European, because the party was aiming only and exclusively at the takeover of state institutions. On November 4, 2015, the Liberal Democratic Party announced their move to the opposition. The Democratic Party was also in talks with the Communist Party, seeking to create the largest coalition in the history of the independent Republic. The Liberal Party and Iurie Leancă were against the participation of the communists (Андреев, *Игра навыйет: ЛДПМ...*). PLDM parliamentarians, in connection with the dismissal of Streleț's government, asked the Constitutional Court for comment. It was noted that the vote of no confidence was based on suspicions, rather than on any evidence of criminal activity (Андреев, *ЛДПМ опротестовала в...*).

The essence of the collapse of the AEI-3 coalition was a personal conflict and the struggle for a sphere of political influence that had been in progress since 2009, between Filat and Plahotniuc. Filat's sudden arrest, justified by his entanglement in the "theft of the century," became a direct consequence of the rejection of Streleț's government. The lack of majority in Parliament reintroduced Moldova's policy into the zone of personal influence and personal actions of individual parliamentarians. Both the Party of Socialists and the Party of Communists were opposed to the call for early elections, which is why they both became advocates of a broad coalition. Also, the Democratic Party preferred

to avoid early elections and therefore negotiated with both the left and the right wings. By the end of 2015, 13 liberals, 24 socialists, 21 communists, 19 democrats and 19 liberal democrats were in the Moldovan Parliament (despite his arrest, Vladimir Filat had the opportunity to sign legislative initiatives with the help of a proxy) and 5 independent Members. According to Moldovan law, the new government has to be set up within the following three months. Otherwise, the President must dissolve the Parliament and call for new elections. However, according to the Constitution of the Republic, the Parliament cannot be dissolved six months before the end of the President's term of office, which ended on March 23, 2016. Therefore, until then, the Parliament could have been dissolved only if President Timofti had resigned, and if the attempt to choose a new head of state failed twice (Андреев, *Пасьянс за евроинтеграцію...*). On November 10, further coalition talks were launched. The parties were mobilized by the need to sign an agreement with the International Monetary Fund and Romania (for the issue of 150 million euros), so successive tranches of money for Moldova from external partners depended on these negotiations.

On December 21, 2015, President Nicolae Timofti entrusted the mission of creating a government to former Prime Minister Ion Sturza. However, he did not receive a vote of confidence, and the President once again refused to nominate Vlad Plahotniuc as Prime Minister. In return, he suggested Ion Păduraru, who did not, however, take up this challenge (for reasons that are unclear to this day) (Całus, *Moldawia: od pluralizmu...*). The candidacy of Pavel Filip for the Prime Minister was a compromise.

On January 20, 2016, the government of Pavel Filip was established. It was supported by 57 out of 101 deputies, including members of the Democratic Party (PDM), the Liberal Party (PL) and partly of the Liberal Democratic Party (PLDM) and the Party of Communists. The appointment of new authorities was accompanied by numerous protests, including an attempt to invade the Parliament building. There were over 20,000 people protesting in the streets of Chisinau. They demanded the resignation of the government and the organization of early elections. The appointment of Pavel Filip's government has consolidated Vlad Plahotniuc's dominant position on the Moldovan political scene, not only due to the fact that one of his closest associates became Prime Minister, but that he is also fully dependent on him (Całus, *Moldawia: nowy rząd...*).

* * *

The years of rule of the Alliance for European Integration coalition led the Republic of Moldova to a profound redevelopment of the political system. Vlad Plahotniuc has led, through his actions, to the arrest of his main opponent – Vlad Filat, thereby taking over his influence. He managed to have Pavel Filip – one of his most important associates, to be elected to the position of Prime Minister. He took control over the judiciary and anti-corruption institutions, the Constitutional Court and the economic structures. In this way, Plahotniuc consolidated the unprecedented political and business influences in the history of Moldova after 1991. The Moldovan system of political power, monopolized by one political center, is now becoming more and more unstable (Calus, *Moldavia: od pluralizmu...*). In this situation, we are dealing with the autocracy of one oligarch – Plahotniuc. In fact, clear authoritarian tendencies are observable.

Conclusions

Former Finance Minister, Veaceslav Negruta, in an interview with the News Maker from July 23, 2015, used a few accurate statements that precisely describe the socio-political and economic situation that has developed in the Republic of Moldova, and which subsequent coalitions have to face. Taking power by new ruling groups is the first test of competence, and also the way of checking their actual intentions of governance. So far, the Moldovan authorities have treated reforms as an obligation established by outside partners, and not as the political will of the rulers and the general public. The state is too heavily bureaucratic and the number of levels of corruption seems to have no end. The process of governing is nothing but a process of obtaining benefits, which is directed by political clans. Thus, the current form of the reform procedures show that individual and group interests of the elites and lobbying are endless (*Альянс и ныне...; ЛДПМ, ДПМ и...; Источник: ЛДПМ выдвинула...*). The biggest challenge for Moldova is therefore to understand the basic recipe for successful transitions – the country needs reforms, not for those who give money but for its own sake. These arguments clearly show the reason for the difficulties in stabilizing the political situation and thus, the related deepening of oligarchic tendencies.

The IMF's recommendations should not be implemented only in order to secure further financial aid transfers. The political situation in Moldova in 2017 could be described as stabilizing (with an unchanging corporate-clan system) but certainly not as stable. Bureaucracy and corruption of all levels of power lead to a lower effectiveness of successive coalitions. The pro-European coalition government is worth as much as the number of zeros of the financial aid that will be given to the Republic of Moldova by the IMF, the World Bank or the European Union. In addition, the problem in question is characteristic not only for the Republic of Moldova, but also for many political systems of the post-Soviet area.

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Koalicje rządzące w Republice Mołdawii po „rewolucji twitterowej” – polityka integracji czy dezintegracja?

Summary

W 2009 roku stworzono w Republice Mołdawii alternatywę dla komunistycznego przywództwa. W 2013 roku, w miejsce „Sojuszu na rzecz Integracji Europejskiej” powołano „Koalicję na rzecz Rządów Proeuropejskich”, co zabezpieczyło dwie kwestie: podpisanie umowy stowarzyszeniowej między Republiką Mołdawii a Unią Europejską oraz interesy lokalnych oligarchów. Po wyborach parlamentarnych w 2014 roku alternatywą dla rosnącej w siłę Partii Socjalistów Igora Dodona stała się kolejna z koalicji „Sojusz polityczny na rzecz Europejskiej Mołdawii”, „przypieczętowana” defraudacją 1 mld USD z mołdawskich banków (12,5% PKB). Powołana w styczniu 2015 roku koalicja już w lipcu tego samego roku została zastąpiona przez ponownie zainicjowany do życia „Sojusz na rzecz Integracji Europejskiej”, a w styczniu 2016 roku przez kolejną z koalicji, bez bliżej określonej nazwy. Ta niezwykle rozbudowana działalność polityczna jest tłem dla fasadowej demokracji i kolejnych wyborów

parlamentarnych zaplanowanych w 2018 roku. Koalicje proeuropejskie w Republice Mołdawii skompromitowały się przed społeczeństwem równie mocno jak poprzednicy (komuniści), wywołując stan ogólnej dezintegracji.

Słowa kluczowe: Mołdawia, koalicja proeuropejska, korupcja, wybory parlamentarne w Republice Mołdawii w 2018 roku